

UNITED STATES ARMY CHAPLAIN CENTER AND SCHOOL

HUMAN NEEDS, VALUES, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED AS

PARTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

C-22-A-02

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PREFACE

This research paper is submitted to the United States Army Chaplain Center and School as a partial requirement for graduation from the Chaplain Officer Advanced Course, C-22. It is one of the practical exercises in the class on Effective Communication, C-22-A-02.

I wish to acknowledge with sincere graditude the two instructors whose inspiration gave rise to this study. They are Dr. Leon Sinder, Long Island University, and Chaplain (LTC) Ermine Todd, Jr., USACHCS.

The style and format in which I chose to write the paper is guided by Kate L. Turabian in her book, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Fourth Edition, 1973.

HUMAN NEEDS, VALUES AND SOCIAL CHANGE

My interest in writing on the subject of need and values in social change was spurred by two of my classes this year. In one class, Value Formation, I was required to give a report on the "Hierarchy of Needs" set forth by Abraham H. Maslow. Relating the needs we seek to gratify, to the forming of values was a new and enlightening concept for me. The second class was Social Change, in which the professor stressed the Value Theory of social change.¹ These two ideas came at the same time in my studies, and I decided to try to tie the two together in my own thinking and for this paper.

A statement by Maslow, "The study of values, of needs and wishes, of bias, of fears, of interests, and of neurosis must become a basic aspect of all scientific studies,"² serves as another incentive to work with this subject and to investigate his ideas on needs and values.

I began with the tentative thesis that as man or a society changes from one level to another in the hierarchy of needs there will be a corresponding social change because the values have changed. This was built from two hypotheses: One,

¹"Basic social change takes place when there is a basic value change." From classnotes for November 19, 1974 in Dr. Leon Sinder's Sociology 616 class, Fall 1974, Long Island University, Brooklyn, New York.

²Motivation And Personality (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1970), p. 6.

that needs determine values and as needs change values also change; and the other that value change causes social change.

It was with these in mind that I began the research.

"Man is a wanting animal and rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction except for a short time. As one desire is satisfied, another pops up to take its place. When this is satisfied, still another comes in to the foreground, etc. It is a characteristic of the human being throughout his whole life that he is practically always desiring something."³

Because this is true we begin to see what motivates people to form values and to act on those values. To construct motivation theories two facts must be paid proper respect: "first, that the human being is never satisfied except in a relative or one-step-along-the-path fashion, and second, that wants seem to arrange themselves in some sort of hierarchy of prepotency."⁴

It is on this premise that Maslow formulates his theory of human motivation which sets forth his "Hierarchy of Needs." Within the "Hierarchy" the needs are divided into five categories: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization, arranged "lower" to "higher". There are real psychological and operational differences between the "higher" and "lower" needs. These differences allow the organism to place a value on each need. The organism itself dictates hierarchies of values rather than have an arbitrary imposition placed on it. If the organism itself chooses between a stronger and a weaker, a higher and a lower, then it is impossible to maintain

³Ibid., p. 24.

⁴Ibid., p. 25.

that one good has the same value as any other good, or that it is impossible to choose between them, or that one has no natural criterion for differentiating good from evil. One such principle of choice is that the basic needs arrange themselves in a fairly definite hierarchy on the basis of relative potency. Thus the safety need is stronger than the love need, which in turn is stronger than the esteem need, which is stronger than the need for self-actualization. This is an order of choice or preference.⁵ It must be said, however, that this is not a rigidly fixed order. It is possible that for some people self-esteem is more important than belonging, for example.

At the base of the hierarchy then, are the physiological drives, which he does not list, but which include such things as hunger, thirst, sex, sensory pleasure, all homeostatic needs, etc. These needs are relatively isolable or independent of each other and of other motivations, and can be localized within the body. However, they can serve as channels for all sorts of other needs as well. A person who thinks he's hungry may really be seeking comfort rather than nutritional requirements. The physiological are the most prepotent in that if all needs are unsatisfied, the organism is dominated by them and all other needs become nonexistent.

Next come the safety needs to include security, stability, order, law, protection, freedom from fear, etc. The expressions of safety needs are found in such phenomena as the

⁵Ibid., pp. 97-8.

preference for a job with tenure and protection, the buying of insurance, the keeping of a savings account, but can also be seen in the very common preference for familiar rather than unfamiliar things, or for the known rather than the unknown.⁶

If the physiological and safety needs are gratified, there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs. Now the person will feel keenly the absence of friends, or a wife or child. He will hunger for affectionate relations with people and for a place in his family or group.⁷

The esteem needs follow (at least usually) the need for belonging, and are classified into two subsidiary sets. "First, the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence....and for independence and freedom. Second, we have what we may call the desire for reputation or prestige, status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation."⁸ In other words self-esteem and esteem from others.

"Even if all these needs are satisfied, we may still often (if not always) expect that a new discontent and restlessness will soon develop, unless the individual is doing what he, individually is fitted for.... What a man can be, he must be. He must be true to his own nature. This need we may call self-actualization."⁹

⁶Ibid., pp. 39-41.

⁷Ibid., p. 43.

⁸Ibid., p. 45.

⁹Ibid., p. 46.

"Our needs usually emerge only when more prepotent needs have been gratified. Thus gratification has an important role in motivation theory."¹⁰

"The gratification of any such need is a 'value'. This is true of the love of safety as it is of the love of truth, or of certainty."¹¹ One of the secondary consequences of satiation of any need is

"independence of and a certain disdain for the old satisfiers and goal objects, that hitherto had been overlooked, not wanted, or only casually wanted. This exchange of old satisfiers for new ones involves many tertiary consequences. Thus there are changes in interests. That is, certain phenomena become interesting for the first time and old phenomena become boring, or even repulsive. This is the same as saying that there are changes in human values.... This shift in values involves, as a dependent phenomenon, reconstruction in philosophy of the future, of the Utopia, of the heaven and hell, of the good life, and of the unconscious wish-fulfillment state of the individual in a crudely predictable direction."¹²

For it is a "peculiar characteristic of the human organism when it is dominated by a certain need...that the whole philosophy of the future tends also to change."¹³

Another secondary consequence of need satiation is that "with this change in values go changes in the cognitive capacities. Attention, perception, learning, remembering, forgetting, thinking, all are changed in a crudely predictable direction because of the new interests and values of the organism."¹⁴

¹⁰Ibid., p. 57.

¹¹Ibid., p. 6.

¹²Ibid., pp. 60-1.

¹³Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 61.

Others, besides Maslow, put stock in the idea that needs effect or determine values. Sir Geoffrey Vickers states,

"The concepts and values with which we select and interpret experience are often regarded by science as mere derivatives of biological needs or instinctual drives. Yet even if they were no more than this, they would still be potent determinants of human behavior in their own right...."¹⁵

In a discussion of community development concepts and how to implement the growth and change in the community or nation I found,

"These basic value concepts, as fields of action, are broken down into four distinct categories:

- a. Physical Improvement of Life
 1. higher living standards
 2. better health
 3. improved educational facilities
 4. greater access, by the vast majority of the community, to the physical resources of the area.
- b. Widespread Popular Participation....
- c. In-Situ Amalgamation
 1. Action programs of this sort focus on changing those pressures, which lead to urban drift, village dissolution, detribalization.
 2. Community disorganization due to anti-social impacts such as consumptive standard and value disruption which are not matched by local production or desired value change.
- d. Revitalization of the Legalistic and Moral Basis of the Community to Provide for:
 1. Equal protection by the law for all members of the community.
 2. The replacement by legal processes those which are marked by personal contact.
 3. Access, under law, to all the socially available goods (tangible and intangible) of the community. Second-class citizenship, outcastes, marginal groups to become integral, pluralistically allowed, members of the community."¹⁶

¹⁵Value Systems And Social Process (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1968), p. XI.

¹⁶Leon Sinder, Concepts in Community Development (New York: Hinda Press, Ltd., 1969), pp. 21-2.

Dr. Sinder seems to say here that in developing a community there is also a sort of hierarchy of needs that determine the behavior or values that must be considered and followed for success.

This leads me to conclude that a person's needs are determinants of his values and that as his needs change, so also his values will change and his behavior will most likely be effected.

If then, this is true of the human organism it is true of the society of which he is a part. The needs of a given society will determine its values which change along with its needs. For example, as the need for safety, ie. law and order, becomes a prepotent need, so will law and order become highly valued by the society for that is where the interest will be.

Since needs determine values the next step is to see that our values influence our choice of behavior.

"Our world of reality is selected and structured by our interests and by the standards which our interests generate. I will comprehend these in the term 'value'."¹⁷ Vickers also says that anthropologists and psychologists, using scientific methods to explore behavior of men and societies saw that values were imposed by inner needs.¹⁸

Kurt Baier states that

"...the values people have are important factors in the

¹⁷Vickers, p. 191.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 50.

determination of their behavior.... The values we already have, now serve as the rational determinants of our choices. When we choose one course of action in preference to another we do so because we have reason to think that it, rather than the other course, will help to realize at least some of our values."¹⁹

"Value judgments appear as the instruments that provide man with the purposes or goals he strives for, with the rules of choice that are needed to determine the course of human behavior."²⁰

Because our values determine our behavior I would say, in agreement with Chaplain Ermine Todd, my instructor in Value Formation class, "A value is that upon which we act." That is to say we act a certain way or certain ways because of our values. Values are a matter of preference and not of factual knowledge. As we acquire new values and abandon some to which we previously subscribed we say our values change. This will then bring about a change in our behavior.

Value changes

"come about either derivatively or directly. It is derivative when, for example, the value at issue is subsidiary or subordinate to some other value and changes because this other value does so.... A second important species of derivative value change exists in content of a means-value that is instrumental to some larger scale end value. When one value (e.g., cleanliness) is bound up with another ("health" or "social acceptance" or "godliness") in a strict means-end relation, then an upgrading or downgrading of one will call for a corresponding change in the hierarchical status

¹⁹"What Is Value?", in Values and the Future, eds. Kurt Baier and Nicholas Rescher (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 33.

²⁰Eugene J. Meehan, Value Judgment and Social Science (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 13.

of the other.

"A value change is direct, in contrast to derivative, when it comes about under the direct, immediate operation of causal factors, rather than...as the result of other value changes."²¹

We show that we subscribe to a certain value by acting on it, but the value antedates the action. "People accept or reject ideas not solely because they work or do not work. Indeed, development ideas most often work only when accepted rather than the other way around."²² Which is to say that the idea must become a value before it can or will be acted upon. When the idea becomes a new value and is acted upon, it will be with new behavior, which is change. When this happens within the group or society and the change is not made by all the members there is a value conflict. Value conflict will exist whenever the emerging value clashes with that value which is prepotent in the society.

"Social problems inevitably include value-conflicts. Ordinarily, values are slowly crystallized, over time, in response to established conditions. But the very nature of social problems includes social change. Social problems are not products of static conditions and accepted definitions: they are products of change and the search for new definitions. When established values provide no effective means of coping with a problem, then new and more adequate values must be developed. The search for new values crystallizes differences among groups..." and herein lies the value-conflict.²³

²¹Nicholas Rescher, "What Is Value Change?" in Values and the Future eds. Kurt Baier and Nicholas Rescher (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 73.

²²Sinder, p. 19.

²³Paul B. Horton and Gerald R. Leslie The Sociology of Social Problems (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1955), p. 538.

When in value conflict the new and challenging value overcomes the old this causes the change in human behavior which is now a social change. This social change may cause new conflict and further change. "Social change generally sharpens conflicts of values,"²⁴ "The broad course of social change in Western society...has inevitably resulted in the re-examination of values that were formerly uncritically held. New values, themselves part of a larger pattern, begin to appear."²⁵

This concept would lead to the conclusion that change, and in this case social change, is inevitable and constant; there is always some social change taking place because society's values are constantly changing.

"Sorokin's work may be said to show that arguments about values in the humanities and social sciences are always circular. Indeed, upon his principles, they are bound to be circular, because all component values whether of knowledge, aesthetics, or morality must, in any truly integral cultural subsystem, reflect or translate the basic presupposition of that cultural system. In any such system the facts to which greatest emphasis is given as well as arguments about their significance or value will be relevant within the 'radius' of that cultural supersystem of which they are at the same time the tangible evidence and support."²⁶

Surely then, all the changes that do take place within society are not of the same importance, and they have whatever import is theirs strictly within the society in which the value is held and the change takes place. "A society's values are its

²⁴Ibid., p. 555.

²⁵Ibid., p. 543.

²⁶F. R. Cowell Values in Human Society: The Contributions of Pitirim A. Sorokin to Sociology (An Extending Horizons Book, 1970), p. 375.

estimates of worth; its preferences, its likes and dislikes. The society takes its character from these values...."²⁷

However, these values may be shared across class or cultural lines, and thus cause change in other societies. But before this can happen the basic values must be shared.

"What one supposes (in one class) the world to be like may not be anywhere near the reality seen by another (in a class of lesser status). Hence development planning must be aware of the many world-views of differing elements in a single community--the basic values shared and not shared."²⁸

What may be of significance to some may have little or no value to others. Thus what may bring change to some, because of the values subscribed to, does not bring change to others who do not accept those values.

"What constitute the really significant changes that occur in a society are, clearly, a matter of perspective."²⁹

"A 'perspective' is a complex pattern of attitudes, values, and perceptions which together give an ordered view of the world. It includes what one sees as foreground and as background, one's hierarchy of values, one's specific judgments concerning persons and groups, and one's conception of himself in relation to others. In a study of social change, nothing is more fundamental than are understanding of altered perspectives."³⁰

"To every member of a society it is the changes in his personal life and the social events of his times

²⁷Horton and Leslie, p. 30.

²⁸Sinder, p. 20.

²⁹Richard T. LaPiere Social Change (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 66.

³⁰Rensis Likert, "Public Opinion Polls," in Sociology: A Text with Adapted Readings, eds. Leonard Broom and Philip (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Company, 1966), p. 303.

that are of paramount significance; for within the framework of his particular society these are what determine whether he will live out his life in peace and comfort, live long but miserably, or die young of famine, disease, or the misfortunes of war.... To constitute a socially significant change, the new must be not only adapted by a sufficient number of the members of a social population to give it currency, but so integrated into the social system that it will endure."³¹

So we might say that like a hierarchy of needs there is a hierarchy of values. The more basic or deeply held the value was that now becomes changed, the more significant in the perspective of the holder is the social change that results from his new value and behavior pattern.

"Socio-cultural change can be thought of as representing two levels of phenomena. On the one hand it is exemplified by the abandonment of old and the adoption of new customs, institutions, rituals, and other behavioral forms.... At a deeper level, change represents progressive modification in basic values and in cognitive orientation, and an understanding of the rules and limiting conditions of life that prevail in one's universe."³²

In order then, to have social change there must be a change in the values to which the society subscribed. Since values are determined by needs, as the society's needs change so will the values. This will result in the social change that in turn may change other basic needs, and the cycle goes on.

³¹LaPiere, p. 66.

³²George M. Foster Tzintzuntzan: Mexican Peasants in a Changing World (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), p. 311.

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